

Advancing Hepatology Research: Excellence in Open Access

We are delighted that the first issue of *Hepatology Communications*, the new open access journal of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD), was published on February 27, 2017. The unprecedented progress and discoveries in hepatology and new trends in publishing that provide readers with easy open access to scientific material warrant this new journal by AASLD. The primary focus of the journal is to address the translational “bench-to-bedside” approach directed to improve human health. While efforts in translational medicine have been based on converting laboratory discoveries to clinical applications, the flow of information from the clinic back to the laboratory is likewise essential to enable future basic research advances. Translational medicine includes a multidisciplinary integration of basic research, preclinical drug discovery and development, and eventually patient-based as well as population-based research. Information from each of these research areas fosters the development of critical advances in translational medicine to benefit the patient.

The new, web-based, open access journal *Hepatology Communications* enables the publication of diverse topics in translational medicine; this is critical for the

flow of information and seamless interactions among liver researchers engaged in early discoveries, drug development, and patient outcomes. Owing to its web-based feature, publishing computational approaches, and large amounts of genomics data derived from clinical samples or animal models, next-generation sequencing data and epigenomic imprint analysis will provide the reader access to extensive data sets. In addition, studies on comprehensive meta-analysis, development of novel tools, methods, or reagents; and clinical reports as well as new approaches in bioengineering and quantitative imaging-based methods in clinical populations related to biomarker discovery or prognostic evaluations toward clinical endpoints of disease will advance our understanding of liver diseases. Studies related to drug toxicity and cancer pharmacogenomics as well as the vast data related to metabolomics and proteome analysis using state-of-the-art mass spectrometry will be easily accessible in an open access journal. Furthermore, large data sets in systems biology approaches to understand interactions between organs, such as liver–gut, liver–brain, and liver–adipose tissue, will facilitate new therapeutic discoveries. In several such studies, novel descriptive data may not provide disease mechanisms and yet may still empower significant future research capable of driving novel concepts and therapeutics in liver diseases. Given the expanding choices for publishing, *Hepatology Communications* aims to maintain excellent standards and achieve high impact, providing basic scientists and clinical researchers from various disciplines of hepatology an attractive option to disseminate their research observations. We encourage direct submissions from all hepatology researchers and to keep in mind the benefit of sharing extensive data sets likely to impact innovative observations that drive therapeutics in liver diseases. Along with the editor-in-chief and my co-associate editors, we look forward to direct participation from hepatology researchers and continued support to ensure success of OUR new open access journal.

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